

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT COUNTIES
Advisory Meeting
August 12, 2003
CDSS Training Center
815 S Street Sierra Room
Sacramento California

1. Welcome - Joeana Carpenter greeted everyone.
2. Agenda Review - Joeana reviewed the agenda, indicating that FNS participation will be rescheduled for the September meeting. No items were added to the agenda.
3. Summary Review - Joeana asked that everyone review the Summary on their own and send any additions/corrections to Richard Trujillo. He will send out a revised version later if necessary. **No changes to the summary were submitted.**
4. Food Stamps – Joeana announced that FNS will conduct training sessions on using the FNS-310 Handbook August 13 in Sacramento, August 19 in Fresno, and August 21 in Santa Ana.

She also discussed the case completion rate and distributed a chart showing each county's rate. The sanction from FNS factors in the state's case completion rate into the Official Combined Payment Error Rate, which can be very expensive. The state's completion rate is currently around 84.5 percent; FNS expects at least 98 percent. Joeana then asked for comments/suggestions. Monterey indicates that they immediately suspend the case for non-cooperation when the household cannot be located, which has greatly affected completions. Solano and Alameda mentioned that more and more working recipients decide not to cooperate even though they are aware of the potential penalty and that their case may be discontinued. Hector reminded the group that likely conclusions can be used when the information is available. Joeana indicated that she will try to provide an updated chart each month, and future charts will be both monthly and cumulative. It is hoped that this information will help show if completion rate problems are related to policy, sampling, and/or other areas.

Timeliness of Application: Joeana stated that FNS Administrative Notice (AN) 03-24 was e-mailed to all supervisors. The AN states that the application is considered to have been processed timely for expedited service (ES) if it is processed within seven days and within 30 days for non-ES cases

Requesting/Returning Cases to DTVU: Richard Trujillo said that when a case is dropped and then the client later decides to cooperate, some

counties do the data gathering (client interview, 3rd Party verifications, etc) to complete the case, and then request the case from DTVU. Other counties request the case from DTVU before the household is interviewed, so the case is retained for more than a month. This creates a tracking problem in DTVU, so all counties should please get all information first (conduct the interview, 3rd Party verifications, etc.) then request the case from DTVU and send the case back to DTVU within five days. All agreed to follow this process and that the five-day turn around is reasonable.

Date of Application: Michael Bowman-Jones discussed the clarification provided by FNS regarding the date of application. The “date” is considered the date the application is received by the County Welfare Department. Example: the household mails the application on April 1 and checks that it only wants MediCal. On April 10, the household is interviewed, and indicates they also want Food Stamps. The date of application is that date between April 1 and April 10 when the document arrived at the CWD. The FS Bureau indicated that this is consistent with state policy per Manual Section 63-301.63.

ABAWD Waivers: Michael provided instructions for processing cases when the county receives one of these waivers. When you are told that your county (or specified area within the county) has received an ABAWD waiver, complete Item 161i-005 (ABAWD Status) on the Q5i Worksheet with code 2 (ABAWD in a waiver area) and leave all other items in Class 161i (Time-Limited Participation) blank.

ABAWDS: Gail Sullivan from the Food Stamps Employment and Training Bureau provided additional information about ABAWDs. All cases are nonassistance (NAFS). Able-bodied adults without dependents are required to work 20 hours per week or an average of 80 hours per month for 33 months in a 36-month period. “Work” can also include an approved activity. The exception to this is when the ABAWD meets the work requirement then fails to meet it through no fault of his/her own such as a lay-off. He/she then gets another 3-consecutive-month period of eligibility. Any FSET activity automatically fulfills the work requirement even if less than the required minimum number of hours. Months are tracked in the MEDS system. California uses a “fixed” 36-month clock, and status codes reflect what the person is doing within that period. The waiver threshold for a county/area is a ten percent unemployment rate or FNS determination that this is a labor surplus area (LSA). The governor is now allowing counties to apply for waivers as labor surplus areas if the entire county is twenty percent above the national unemployment average for 24 consecutive months with the period being that used by FNS for the LSA determination. There are now 19 counties with full waivers, and San Francisco has a zip code specific waiver. (See handout.) MEDS does not have a status code reflecting these waivers, so the information therein can be misleading. She also encouraged counties to make use of the 15 percent exemption that is available to all counties. (Michael was then asked if the exemption can be applied retroactively when the case has

been found to be in error. He stated he thought not, but will check with FNS.) Gail can be contacted at (916) 654-1464 or by E-mail.

5. Corrective Action - Since Leanna Pace had only ten copies of this month's RERR, it was decided that Richard will send them out electronically. The error rate is coming down and looking very good. Requests for SEP fund proposals will be going out to the counties very soon. Proposals must address payment accuracy and error reduction. There is an automation seminar September 10 covering the do's and don'ts of implementing new programs to avoid error rate spikes and joining any of the consortia. Information on the seminar has been sent to CWD directors, county QC, and QA staffs. The QR seminar is still on hold because the issue of the hold harmless period has not been resolved, though it appears FNS will say no. There are accuracy improvement and payment accuracy conferences coming up in September. Corrective Action Plan reports are due November 1, and notice should be received 30 days in advance.
6. Federal Difference Cases: Hector Hernandez indicated that none exists at this time for the Federal Fiscal Year. He will do a 45-60 minute presentation next month on the Federal difference/arbitration process. Send an E-mail to Hector covering any areas or specific cases you would like discussed. Hector suggested reviewing the arbitration letters from other states forwarded to supervisors last spring for ideas, as we only want to escalate differences when appropriate.
7. CalWORKs: Warren Ghens indicated that most of his time has been spent working on quarterly reporting issues, and he is answering questions on a flow basis. Joseph is checking T48 code 01 usage to see if we are taking full advantage of the exemption allowing removal of the assistance unit (AU) from the participation rate because of the presence of a child less than 12 months old. The handout of June 26, 2003 shows 33 cases were discovered to have been coded incorrectly out of 39 that were returned to counties; that dated July 15, 2003 shows 41 of 44 cases changed for the quarter. These cases will be sent to you on a flow basis. If the case contains a child less than 12 months old and code 01 is not used, please explain in the Comments screen. Only look for code 01 if the AU is not fully participating.
8. Richard Trujillo distributed the FS Edit-All Failure Diary report compiled by Ed Flores. The reports show all Federal edits which did not clear on state sample cases. The results show improvement, however, all edits sent back to the counties should not have reached DTVU. In December 2002, 77 cases were sent back to the counties to clean-up the data and clear the edits; 51 in January; 14 in February, and 17 in March. Staff is to be complimented for reducing the number of cases returned and also requested to clear all the edits identified on this report prior to transmission.
9. Regional Report - Counties asked for a discussion of the disposition report at the next meeting.